

1892.
NEW ZEALAND.

PUBLIC PETITIONS A TO L COMMITTEE

(REPORT OF, ON THE PETITION OF ANNIE CHEMIS, OF KAIWARA, TOGETHER WITH PETITION,
AND MINUTES OF EVIDENCE AND APPENDIX).

Brought up on the 7th October, 1892, and ordered to be printed.

REPORT.

PETITIONER alleges that on the 15th day of July, 1889, her husband, Louis Chemis, was wrongfully convicted for the murder of one Thomas Hawkings.

Petitioner prays that an inquiry may be made into all the circumstances in connection with the said conviction, and that justice may be done to her husband.

I am directed to report that, while the Committee have been unable to find sufficient evidence to justify them in advising any definite action, still they are of opinion that the case is one which should be carefully reconsidered, and therefore recommend the Executive to review the evidence taken by your Committee, and deal with the prisoner in such manner as they may consider true justice demands.

7th October, 1892.

C. H. MILLS, Chairman.

PETITION.

To the Honourable the Speaker and Members of the House of Representatives in Parliament Assembled.

THE humble petition of Annie Chemis, of Kaiwara, the wife of Louis Chemis, now a convict, sheweth,—

One Louis Chemis was, on the 15th day of July, 1889, convicted of the crime of murder committed on one Thomas Hawkings.

The counsel for the defence was, prior to and during the trial, seriously ill, and was, during the last days of the trial and especially during his speech for the defence, so visibly incapacitated by the increase of the malady, as to materially interfere with his conduct of the case and the delivery of his speech. The counsel for the defence went from the Court to his deathbed, and succumbed to the malady on the 17th day of July, 1889.

The evidence on which the accused was convicted was of a peculiarly frail character, and rested entirely upon the credibility of the police as to whether two pieces of paper were found in the prisoner's house.

No evidence whatever was produced by the defence to account for the occupation by the accused of his time during the time when the murder was undoubtedly committed. The evidence subsequently obtained by Mr. Jellicoe most seriously affected the credibility of the police on the very point of what they found and failed to find in the prisoner's house, and afforded a direct disproof of some of their evidence thereon. The latter evidence also accounted in the clearest way for the condemned man's time from the time when he left work on the night of the murder to the hour of 7 o'clock, which was certainly long after the hour when it was committed.

The evidence also distinctly rebutted evidence on minor points used by the prosecution as evidence against the accused, and of which rebutting evidence your petitioner can prove that they were aware, and which they purposely refrained from using.